



North Carolina Notice

Contraceptive Coverage Exclusion for Religious Employers

Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte

The state of North Carolina requires that employers provide employees with contraceptive drug and device coverage under a health benefit plan which includes prescription drug benefits. The state requires that outpatient services related to the contraceptive drug or device are covered as well.

However, the state of North Carolina realizes that this mandated benefit may be contrary to a religious employer's religious tenets, and gives the religious employer the choice to request that the insurer providing a health benefit plan exclude coverage for prescription contraceptive drugs and devices for the purposes of contraceptive use. Prescribed contraceptive drugs and devices ordered by a health care provider for the purposes of preserving the life and health of a covered person must be covered.

In accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte excludes prescription contraceptive drug and device coverage under its prescription drug benefit for employees.

Woman's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998

On October 21, 1998, the President signed the \$500 billion omnibus appropriations bill into law. Within this budget bill is the Woman's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998. This Act is effective for plan years beginning on or after October 21, 1998 including collectively bargained plans.

The Woman's Health and Cancer Rights Act requires group health plans and issuers to provide coverage of reconstructive surgery if the plan provides medical and surgery benefits for a mastectomy.

The reconstructive coverage may be subject to applicable annual deductibles and coinsurance provisions as long as they are consistent with those under the plan for other conditions.

The required coverage includes:

- ◆ Reconstruction of a surgically removed breast;
- ◆ Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance; and
- ◆ Prostheses and physical complications from all stages of mastectomy, including lymphedemas.

This serves as formal notice that the medical plan provided by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte provides the appropriate coverage, as outlined by this legislation.